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FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5428
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 3898

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000953

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/SPG, D, INR, DRL, PRM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/26/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [SU](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: DARFUR PEACE TALKS: DEMARCHES DELIVERED, INITIAL
REACTIONS TO PEACE PROPOSAL

REF: A. STATE 65383

[1](#)B. ABUJA 939

Classified By: Khartoum CDA Cameron Hume for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Khartoum CDA Hume discussed the escalating violence in Darfur and US concerns about Usama Bin Laden's statements about Sudan with Sudanese Vice President Taha on April 26. Taha told USDEL that with a few changes, the Government of Sudan found the AU mediation's draft Darfur Peace Agreement acceptable. He cited the issues of timing and scope of the disarmament of the janjaweed and integration of movement forces as contentious. Sudan Liberation Movement leader Minni Minnawi said the document is workable. Abdelwahid Nur is unhappy with the document because it does not make Darfur a region or give the movements a Vice Presidency. USDEL is pushing the parties to identify and focus on key areas of concern and to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve them. End Comment.

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DEMARCHES DELIVERED
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[1](#)2. (C) During a meeting with VP Taha and Intelligence Chief Salah Gosh on April 26, Khartoum CDA Hume raised the issue of escalating violence in Darfur. He noted that earlier in the day, President Bush expressed his concern over the use of helicopters and an Antonov in attacks on Jockhana. CDA Hume told Taha that a peace deal is possible soon but that continued attacks in Darfur could undermine the process. He reminded Taha that ultimately, the GOS is the winner in the peace process because it will be able to reassert control over Darfur. Given this, the US expects the GOS to take the necessary actions to end the violence and make the necessary concession to make peace possible. Hume stated that helicopter gunships are not necessary in Darfur and their use should be stopped. He advised Taha to announce the pull-out of all helicopter gunships from Darfur as a sign of good faith. Taha and Gosh listened carefully. On another issues, Hume stated that Taha did not have to respond now, but that the US is committed to strengthening AMIS, providing NATO logistics support, and a UN transition. Hume delivered the same strong message on violence in Darfur to Sudanese Director of Operations, LG Ismat Abdelrahmane and MG Ibrahim Mohammed. In response to Hume's suggestion that the Government pull its helicopter gunships out of Darfur, Ismat said "we will consider it". On the issue of Usama Bin Laden's threats to wage a "jihad" against Western forces (Ref A), Hume registered US concerns that GOS statements had stoked anti-Western sentiments.

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REACTIONS TO AU PEACE PROPOSAL

13. (C) Taha also provided USDEL with the GOS's initial reactions to the draft Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). Taha said that the Government could live with most of the document, but wants it to be implementable. The major issues are the timing of the disarmament of the janjaweed with the assembly of rebel forces and of the integration movement members into the armed forces and security services. On the issue of janjaweed disarmament, Taha said that the complete disarmament of the janjaweed was not possible in five months and in fact could take years. As a result, linking the beginning of the assembly of the movement forces with complete disarmament was unworkable.

14. (C) Integration also remains a contentious issue. USDEL told Taha that SLM faction leader Minni Minnawi's key concern is the protection of his people during the integration process. Minni is worried that if integration is done on an individual basis, there are no protections for his soldiers who are integrated into units commanded by janjaweed. Minni and his forces are worried that they could be killed or otherwise abused if integrated into such units individually. USDEL told Taha that the GOS needs to help Minni find the guarantees for the security of his forces.

15. (C) Taha's other concerns are relatively minor. First, Taha said that the number of seats allocated to the movements in state assemblies would take away the National Congress Party's majority. Second, on wealth-sharing, the Government could live with its increased financial obligation, but would need to work out how to come up with the additional 300 million USD outlined in the document for 2006 given that the GOS already had passed its budget. Taha said that the GOS

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would give its response to the AU Mediation on April 27.

SLM REACTIONS

16. (C) Initial reactions by SLM leaders Minni Minnawi and Abdelwahid Nur varied. In a meeting with USDEL, Minni was focused, organized, and realistic about what the peace deal could achieve. He said that the SLM could work with the mechanisms in the document. His representatives on the various commissions are working on suggested changes to give to the AU mediation. The integration process and future of his forces remains his top concern. USDEL lawyer and military expert are working with Minni on developing counterproposals on integration that provide the necessary security guarantees for his forces. On power-sharing, Minni was clear that he is not seeking a senior position in the Government. In a measured assessment of his colleagues, Minni suggested that neither Abdelwahid Nur or Dr. Khalil Ibrahim should seek one either. USDEL advised Minni that it is important for the movements to view the document as a means to achieving their future goals, developing a political party and future alliances, and protecting Darfur's overall interests.

17. (C) USDEL brought both leaders together at Minni's request. Abdelwahid Nur was still smarting because the document does not give the movements the Vice Presidency or a region by fiat immediately instead of by referendum over time. He continues to complain about SPLM's lack of support for Darfur. USDEL advised Minni and Abdelwahid that the movements could find ways to strengthen the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority to make the position of Senior Special Assistant more attractive. USDEL also pushed Minni and Abdelwahid to continue dialogue on the issues of the disarmament of the janjaweed, integration, and importance of focusing on the political futures of the movements, all achievable through the draft through engagement with the

Government.

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COMMENT
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18. (SBU) The parties are seriously considering the document, despite the movements' disappointment with powersharing proposals. USDEL is pushing all parties to identify a few key areas of the document where they need changes and then to make counterproposals that would satisfy their concerns. In addition, USDEL is urging the movements to work together on these areas of mutual concern.
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